



GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

January 22, 2007

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture
14th Street & Independence, Southwest
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary,

This is to request that you designate Merced County in the State of California, a disaster area due to extreme low temperatures and freezing conditions that began January 12, 2007. Though additional time is needed to realize the full effect of the freezing temperatures, current estimates are reflecting more than a 75 percent loss on 345 acres of winter radicchio. The county is also reporting irrigation and animal water lines bursting and a possible loss of 40 acres of seedling alfalfa. Future damage may be realized in 4,100 acres of sugar beets.

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) requested that the county agricultural commissioner submit a *California County Agricultural Commissioner Disaster Report*, which is enclosed for your review. Preliminary surveys of Merced County growers indicate agricultural damage/loss estimates exceed \$1.5 million. This damage will be devastating to affected producers, farm-related businesses and the general economy of the county. If you have any questions or need additional information, your staff may contact OES Director Henry Renteria at (916) 845-8510.

Thank you for your favorable and immediate consideration of this request on behalf of California's farmers and ranchers in dire need of USDA disaster assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arnold Schwarzenegger'.

Arnold Schwarzenegger

Enclosure





DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

David A. Robinson
Agricultural Commissioner
Director of Weights and Measures
Director of Animal Control

2139 Wardrobe Avenue
Merced, CA 95340-6495
(209) 385-7431
www.co.merced.ca.us

District Office
342 "D" Street
Los Banos, CA 93635
(209) 827-2030

Animal Control
2080 Grogan Avenue
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 385-7436

Equal Opportunity Employer

January 17, 2007

Henry R. Renteria, Director
Governor's Office of Emergency Services
3650 Schriever Avenue
Mather, CA 95655

Dear Director Renteria:

Survey of Merced County growers has revealed anticipated crop loss of more than \$1.5 million due to the recent prolonged cold night temperatures. CIMIS weather data for Merced shows daily low temperatures below 20°F between January 12 and January 17, 2007.

The one specific crop which we have received a quantified report of damage is winter radicchio, with an estimated 75% loss on 345 acres.

We have received other damage reports (without specific monetary amounts) for irrigation and animal water line bursting as well as a report that 40 acres of seedling alfalfa in 3rd true leaf stage may be lost. More time is needed to assess these losses. Additionally, approximately 4,100 acres of mature sugar beets, with planned spring harvest, may have suffered damage. Growers report that the extent of sugar beet damage will not be known for about 2 weeks.

Please use this letter and attached reports for consideration of USDA primary disaster declaration designation for Merced County.

Sincerely,

David A. Robinson
Agricultural Commissioner

Cc: Tom Wells, Merced County OES
Laura Westerfield, Merced County FSA
Ed Williams, CDFA
Robert Rolan, Madera CAC

[illegible]

13. Total Farms in County:

(Use most recent U.S. Farm Census number.)

Number

2,764 Total Growers (1 Winter Radicchio Grower)

14. Farms with Production Losses of:

Number

100%

90 to 99%

80 to 89%

70 to 79%

1

60 to 69%

50 to 59%

40 to 49%

30 to 39%

20 to 29%

Less than 20%

15. Livestock and Poultry Losses of:

Number
Destroyed/Damaged3-Year Avg. Price
(From Annual Crop Report)

Dollar Loss

Cattle (Excluding milk cows)

0

0

Milk Cows

0

0

Milk Production

0

0

Sheep

0

0

Hogs

0

0

Poultry

0

0

Aquaculture

0

0

Apiary

0

0

Other

0

0

16. Farms with Physical Losses of:

Number

Major

Minor

17. Farm Facilities Damaged:

Number

Dwellings & Service Buildings

Destroyed

Major

Minor

Dollar Loss

Structures

0

0

Machinery & Equipment

0

0

Land Damages (Acres)

0

0

Other

0

0

Remarks: